DECLASSIFIED

July 16, 1962 - Monday

Letitia Elliot and Susan Mary Alsop came today to stay with us at the house.

Bob Roosa, Under Secretary of the Treasury, called on me this morning. He is spending a short time here on his way to Paris. Despite the rumors so prevalent in London of a possible dollar devaluation, he was emphatic in re-asserting the President's decision not to change the price of gold.

Ted Abernethy's daughter, with two friends from Vassar, called on me.

I gave a lunch for Assistant Secretary Mennen Williams at the house, with these guests:

Mr. Tom Stacey, The Sunday Times
Mr. Colin Legum, Observer
Mr. John Midgley, The Economist
Mr. Ernest Atkinson, Birmingham Post and Gazette
Mr. John Bevan, Daily Mirror
Mr. Donald McLachlan, Sunday Telegraph
Mr. Morris Green, The Daily Telegraph and Morning Post
Mr. David Williams, West Africa-Overseas Newspapers Ltd.
Mr. Doon Campbell, Reuters
Mr. Roy Lewis, The Times
Mr. Martin Herz
Mr. William Clark
Mr. Joseph Wagner
Mr. James Pettus

This afternoon, I saw Dr. Killian, for whom I have great admiration. He is here for meetings of the International Science Institute.

Tonight, we had a reception at the residence, primarily in honor of the International Intercollegiate Lawn Tennis teams. The American representatives were chiefly from Harvard and Yale. We added a considerable number of people, amounting to about 100 in all.

The weather remains gloomy, the thermometer hovering in the mornings around 60 degrees.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY RELJ DATE 6-17-81
FA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

ADJUSTED

Latrobe has been called the father of the architectural profession in America. Twelve years younger than Sir John Soane, but not apparently influenced by him directly, he was, like Soane, determined to effect a revolution in architectural taste. This produced, for us, the Greek revival, and a first national style.

Latrobe remained in America. Other Englishmen came and went. One of them, young William Jay of Bath, visiting his sister at Savannah, Georgia, in 1817, designed a number of fine quasi-Regency houses much extolled in that area.

The Gothic style, however, was to take over before Latrobe could emulate anything like the sophistication Nash developed at the Pavilion. What was called "English Collegiate Gothic" was favoured in many of our universities, so that we still call it "Educational Gothic." With what one critic has called "hammer, sawtooth and nail," we also constructed a number of architectural follies.

Although the word "folly," applied to a house or a building, has its roots in the French for "delight and pleasure", we must not forget that it also has connotations of impermanence. One of our great American architectural follies was an inferior, but famous, variation of John Nash's triumph at Brighton. Phineas Taylor Barnum, the American circus impresario, who ascribed his commercial success to the belief that "a fool is born every minute," was the sponsor of that monstrosity.

During a publicity campaign, eulogistic of himself, Barnum erected at Bridgeport, Connecticut, an oriental fantasy called Iranistan.

The house was opened in 1848. Barnum invited the Swedish soprano, Jenny Lind, whom he had lured to the States, to come for a visit. Miss Lind was not certain this was a proper thing to do. But when told that Iranistan was modelled on the Royal Pavilion at Brighton, the seat of the former First Gentleman of Europe, she concluded that Mr. Barnum might also be a gentleman, so she accepted.

During this year of George IV's bi-centenary, scrutinising the Regency exhibition installed here, which we shall have the pleasure of inspecting later tonight, indeed simply looking about us here in the Banqueting Room, we are reminded that his collections were themselves great achievements. We should not forget that more than the portico of the National Gallery, originally from his Carlton House, is due to him; the Dutch and Flemish pictures he bought himself and the Angerstein Collection of pictures, bought at his suggestion by the British Government, became important additions to the National Collection. His choice of designers, both in architecture and furniture, was almost unerring. This Pavilion, above all, expressed the special quality of happy exuberance, balanced by a sense of proportion, that typifies the artistic achievements of his era.

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